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CONVENTIONAL ARMED FORCES IN EUROPE COLLECTIVE PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 05 STATE 008267

SENSITIVE  
SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 10/30/15  
TAGS: [PARM](#) [PREL](#) [KCFE](#) [OSCE](#) [NATO](#)  
SUBJECT: CFE/HLTF: GUIDANCE FOR JANUARY 28, 2010 HLTF  
AND RELATED MEETINGS

REF: (A) USNATO 522: NOVEMBER 5 HLTF MEETING, (B) USNATO  
595: NATO-RUSSIA: SYG'S TRIP TO MOSCOW, (C)  
09MOSCOW3139: EUR/RPM DIRECTOR TURNER DEC 16-18 MOSCOW  
VISIT, (D) STATE 127435: GUIDANCE ON RUSSIA'S DRAFT  
TREATY GOVERNING RELATIONS AMONG NATO-RUSSIA COUNCIL  
MEMBER STATES

Classified By: Richard A. Davis, VCI/CCA Director, for  
reasons 1.4(b) and (d).

¶1. (C) Allies reaffirmed in the December 2009 NATO  
Ministerial Statement their commitment to CFE as stated  
in the Strasbourg/Kehl Summit Declaration, confirmed a  
readiness to intensify efforts in 2010 to find a way  
forward on CFE, and noted it could be difficult to  
continue providing CFE information to Russia in the  
future if Russia's "suspension" continues. Discussion  
at the January 28 High Level Task Force (HLTF) meeting  
will center on the need to intensify engagement with  
Russia on CFE, especially in the context of Russia's  
recently tabled proposals on a European Security Treaty  
and NATO-Russia Treaty. Allies will look to the U.S.  
for ideas on how to move beyond the CFE impasse as we  
develop a unified approach on the broader Russian  
proposals in preparing for a NATO Summit, a possible  
NATO-Russia Summit and possibly an OSCE Summit  
anticipated in late 2010.

¶2. (C) U.S. goals for the January 28, 2010 HLTF and  
associated meetings are as follows:

- Stress that our focus in 2010 as we intensify efforts  
to find a way forward on CFE is to change the current  
dynamic with Russia without compromising NATO unity. We  
do not want to enable Russia to exploit differences.
- Emphasize the need to consider the way forward on CFE  
in light of other elements of the European security  
dynamic, including Russia's proposals for European  
Security and NATO-Russia Treaties, and the facts on the  
ground; seek Allied thinking on how these issues  
intersect and what a useful fruitful path forward might  
be.
- Seek Allied views on next steps on resolving the CFE  
impasse while reinforcing the need for unity based on  
close consultations and aimed at moving toward a  
comprehensive solution.

- Express support for continuing with the NATO CFE inspection plan and raising Russia's refusals in the Joint Consultative Group (JCG) stressing the negative impact of Russia's actions on the CFE regime and European security as a whole.

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Background  
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13. (C) Since the last HLTF in November, Allies have continued to indicate strong interest in intensifying efforts to find a solution to the impasse on CFE. Allies share our dissatisfaction with the lack of progress on finding a solution on CFE to date, but some are concerned that any hasty shifts in the Alliance approach or new CFE initiatives could compromise NATO's principled positions and divide the Alliance. Some Allies are not prepared to show additional flexibility to reach a CFE deal until Russia shows some willingness to compromise. At the same time, there are some - Germany stands out - interested in seeing movement toward a solution in the near term. It is unlikely Germany will press for action at this HLTF, although the German rep may lean further forward during pre-HLTF quad discussions.

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14. (SBU) Engagement with Russia on CFE has been limited in recent months. The NATO Secretary General's mid-December trip to Moscow (ref B) included discussion of Russia's proposal to define "substantial combat forces" in the NATO-Russia Council (NRC) as well as some discussion on CFE. FM Lavrov noted Russia has long sought to define "substantial combat forces" and expressed Russia's readiness to renew CFE negotiations on the package approach while stressing Russia was not considering resuming implementation of CFE at present. The International Staff intends to raise SYG Rasmussen's trip report for discussion in the HLTF and note the possibility that Russia's push to define "substantial combat forces" in the NRC is a concrete proposal that signals Russian interest in forward movement on CFE and deserves serious attention.

15. (C) Alliance unity on CFE remains a priority for the United States. We want to have an open discussion with Allies in seeking ideas on how to change the dynamic on CFE with Russia while maintaining unity and achieving a comprehensive solution that addresses the security interests of all CFE States Parties. As we start exploring ideas and finding common ground on a way forward, the U.S. should try to temper any sense of urgency to respond to Russia's proposals without well-considered positions that lead us toward a solution, and continue to emphasize the need for a unified approach on CFE issues. Allies may have heard about the appointment of a senior U.S. official dedicated to the CFE issue and will be very interested in any details, as well as any updates on START follow on negotiations.

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Talking points:  
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16. (SBU) U.S. Del should draw from the following points in discussions on the way forward on CFE:

-- As we consider the way forward on CFE we believe we need to view next steps in light of our overall European security agenda this year, culminating in the Lisbon summit in November. Secretary Clinton intends to give a major speech on European security tomorrow in Paris to frame U.S. thinking on work this year, and the enduring

principles and goals we share.

--Clearly, we need to do some thinking on how we move ahead on CFE, but we cannot sacrifice our unity or the underlying principles of sovereignty, territorial integrity, host nation consent and transparency. At the same time, we need an approach that takes into account other elements of the European security dynamic, including Russia's proposals for European Security and NATO-Russia Treaties, and the facts on the ground. The constructive engagement of Russia will facilitate greater European security. We must calibrate our way forward on CFE and our response to Russia's EST and NATO-Russia Treaty proposals to encourage Russia to be a responsible stakeholder in European stability and security rather than a destructive outsider.

- (If asked whether the U.S. is abandoning the Parallel Actions Package supported by all Allies): The Parallel Actions Package addresses all the key issues on the table, and reflects key principles which we are not abandoning. The question is what we can do to get from where we are to a more constructive place.

- As a practical matter there are some aspects of the European security picture that have not changed for the better in the last several years. And as NATO develops its new strategic concept, we will need to take account of how the Alliance can respond effectively to challenges that are far more complex than any we have faced before.

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- It is also the case that traditional measures of security have not changed for the better: partly as a consequence of Russia's suspension of CFE, we have less military transparency in Europe than we had five years ago. Transparency in the South Ossetian and Abkhazian regions of Georgia is lacking. There are more gray areas in Europe today than there were a decade ago. Moreover, there is a need for greater transparency in all three dimensions of security, not just the pol-military area that is the focus of the HLTF's work.

- There is no reason to suppose that the Russian position on CFE issues has changed. But we know that Moscow has expressed continuing interest in discussions with NATO on the meaning of the NATO-Russia Founding Act language on stationing of "substantial combat forces," and other issues. A key question for us is where CFE fits into this complicated picture, and how we translate "intensified efforts" to move forward on CFE into concrete results that solve the current impasse.

-- Alliance unity remains important as we look to intensify our efforts and explore options to change the current dynamic with Russia to achieve progress on a comprehensive CFE solution.

-- The U.S. is committed to working hard with you this year to find a solution that resolves CFE concerns and preserves the benefits of the CFE regime, as we also ensure that the solution meets current and foreseeable security needs. [If asked whether a senior official has been dedicated to the CFE issue: as I said, we are thinking creatively about how to invigorate our diplomacy but we're not ready to make any specific announcements.]

-- At the December NATO and OSCE Ministerials, we made clear that Allies remain firmly committed to the CFE Treaty and still seek a solution with Russia while we signaled to Russia that it is past time to move forward.

-- Although we are keen for progress and open to ideas, we cannot lose sight of the fact that any solution must address the security concerns of all 30 CFE States Parties. We should continue to stress to Moscow that Russia needs to match the flexibility already shown by others and join us in implementing CFE.

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Russia's European Security and NATO-Russia Treaty  
Proposals  
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¶7. (C/REL NATO) Discussions on a way ahead for CFE will take place in parallel with the OSCE's Corfu Process as well as discussions on Russia's recent draft treaty proposals. The NRC proposal includes a proposed definition of "substantial combat forces" which has CFE implications per ref D. Moreover, the IS has suggested Russia's interest in defining this term could be read as an indicator of its interest in progress on CFE, although there is also the possibility that it is intended to replace CFE. U.S. rep should seek Allied views and, as appropriate, note:

-- We believe that the OSCE, with its inclusive membership and multi-dimensional approach to security, is an essential venue for discussions about European security that concern all OSCE participating States. Consistent with the Presidents' statements, we also intend to discuss elements of Russia's European security proposals in the NATO-Russia Council as appropriate.

-- Regarding Russia's NRC proposal, there are some elements that could be useful to integrate into NRC work, but we remain concerned by many of the other ideas and look forward to continued discussions.

-- It is not clear to us that Russia's push to define "substantial combat forces" is a sign of interest in achieving a CFE deal. Moscow may well see that as a

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substitute for working this in the CFE context, rather than as a complement to it.

-- The Russian Federation proposal aims to define explicitly the meaning of the term "substantial combat forces" as it is used in the NATO-Russia Founding Act by proposing both structural and numerical definitions. While the structural parameters suggested are familiar (e.g., 'brigade'), the numerical parameters for equipment are extremely restrictive. Moreover, this is the first time we can recall the Russian Federation proposing that such a definition be made legally binding.

-- While we welcome Russian proposals, we must consider carefully how to proceed with this aspect of it in the context of CFE discussions. Our goal is to achieve agreement on an overall CFE solution before addressing specific elements, as appropriate, in the NRC and elsewhere. Defining "substantial combat forces" is an element of the package approach and addressing it separately in the context of the NRC may not advance our efforts. On the other hand, willingness to define "substantial combat forces" may eliminate the ambiguity surrounding NATO enlargement and stationing of troops in the Baltic States that Russia has long sought as a way to maintain strategic predictability, providing a possible breakthrough for the CFE impasse.

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Contacts and Bilaterals  
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18. (C/REL NATO) U.S.-Russia Bilateral Meetings:

-- On December 7, U/S Tauscher met with Russian D/FM Ryabkov to discuss non-proliferation and missile defense cooperation. Although there was not a specific discussion on CFE, both sides agreed it was an area in which we needed to make progress as it contributes to European stability.

-- In addition, EUR/RPM Director Bruce Turner visited Moscow December 16-18 to discuss a range of European security and NATO-Russia issues, including CFE. Turner met with MFA Department of Security Affairs and Disarmament (DVBR) conventional arms control director Anton Mazur who reiterated familiar positions on key issues and noted Russia's interest in finding a solution to the CFE impasse on the basis of the Parallel Actions Package approach. Mazur suggested States Parties should seek to make some updates to the adapted CFE Treaty now, specifying that the flank issue cannot be put off. He noted it would be better to build from the existing treaty through iterative adaptations rather than negotiate a completely new treaty.

? During General Jones' January 21 meeting with Russian Security Council Secretary Patrushev, he affirmed that the United States was ready to engage with Russia on President Medvedev's European Security proposals, including in the NATO-Russia Council.

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As Needed  
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19. (C) Russia's proposal for a review of Vienna Document 1999: Per State 4427, we expect Russia to engage in the Forum for Security Cooperation early this year on the 2009 Ministerial agreement (MC.DEC/16/09), which, inter alia, calls on participating States (pS) to "explore ways in which to strengthen the OSCE's political-military toolbox, with particular attention to strengthening current arms control and CSBM instruments, including strengthening the Vienna Document 1999." Russia is likely to interpret this as a mandate to revive the Russian-Belarusian-Kazakh proposal to "re-open" VD99. Washington currently is reviewing its

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approach to VD99 and proposed CSBMs in the context of broader European security discussions.

-- If raised, U.S. del may note our interest in thorough discussions (either in Brussels or Vienna, or both) about the potential benefit(s) to NATO before Allies pursue specific CSBMs or changes to VD99 in the FSC.

-- If raised, Washington is interested to know if delivery of Russia's draft treaty proposals has impacted Allies' willingness to review current instruments.

110. (SBU) U.S.-Russia START negotiations: Allies appreciate that current efforts underway to finalize START negotiations are a priority effort and have noted that a successful outcome could serve as impetus for progress on CFE. If raised, U.S. del should utilize press guidance points below to provide any updates on the status and expected outcome of START negotiations. Delegation should steer away from commentary on the negotiations.

-- Senior U.S. and Russian officials met last week in Moscow to continue discussions on a New START agreement as well as address a number of other important issues on the bilateral agenda.

-- The U.S. and Russian delegations are working in Geneva to reach agreement. We will not make any predictions about when we will finish negotiations. What is important is to arrive at a quality agreement that meets the needs and interests of both sides.

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Next Meeting  
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¶11. (SBU) It is likely the next HLTF will be scheduled for sometime in March, prior to the April NATO Informal Ministerial. HLTF rep should support such a meeting timeline.  
CLINTON